

In Iola, we were quite fortunate that leadership decided to begin a live-stream broadcast of worship services several years ago. This meant that Sunday mornings were relatively unchanged as I decided for the sake of continuity and familiarity to continue with a regular order of worship. We have modified a few things but still broadcast each Sunday morn, save for a few glitches electronically and one Elijah's-got-nothing-on-us storm!

Pastorally I have had to do what all pastors have done, relying on phone, email, and text messaging much more. I have also tried to make happenstance meetings around town with members and friends of FPC, Iola more than a simple hello - I have tried to ask about the well-being (physically, mentally, and spiritually) of them and family. It is with a great and deeply felt sigh of relief that all of us here in Iola have been healthy COVID-19 wise and I have kept the undertaker at bay as well.

Then, just as it seemed that the COVID-19 storm was beginning to lessen we had to brace ourselves with even less preparation time for the next storm to hit our nation and society. Iola's Black Lives Matter rally was planned by a group of locals who invited me in on it, and on Sunday afternoon, June 9, 250 people came to the square while many others watched online or have viewed the video of our very successful and peaceful rally.

Though denied regular worshiping practices we have found our church to live and well and prospering! Though denied our presence together we have found our voices in service still. Though denied freedom as we had grown accustom to we have relished and, perhaps, come to understand our freedom in Christ Jesus to be even sweeter.

Dan Davis